Chivalrous and Religious Order of the Crown of Thorns: Statutes.

[By Joseph René Vilatte]

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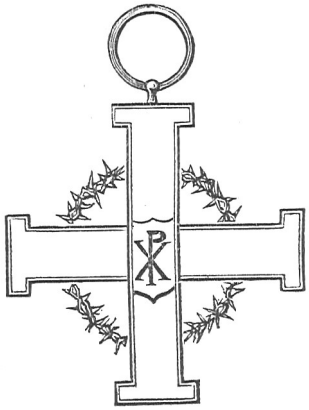
CHIVALROUS
AND
RELIGIOUS ORDER
OF THE
CROWN OF THORNS



STATUTES.

FORT HOWARD, WIS:
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1893.

Imprimatur:
JOSEPH RENÉ, Metropolitan,
Grand Master of the Chivalrous
and Religious Order of
the Crown of Thorns.

PATRONS OF THE ORDER.

His Holiness MAR IGNATIUS PETER III,
Patriarch of the Apostolic See of Antioch.

His Grace ANTONIO FRANCISCO ALVAREZ,
Metropolitan of Goa and Ceylon.

The Rt. Rev. MAR GREGORIUS,
Bishop of Niranam.

The Rt. Rev. MAR ATHANASIUS,
Bishop of Kottayam.

His Eminence JOSEPH MAR DIONYSIUS
Metropolitan of Malabar.

His Grace JOSEPH RENE VILATTE,
Grand Master, Archbishop of Old Catholics in U. S. A.

The Rt. Rev. J. THEO. HOLLY, D.D., LL.D.
Bishop of Hayti.

H. R. H. PRINCE GUY de LUSIGNAN.
Paris.

Hon. J. S. HENDERSON.
Member of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Rev. G. J. FERCKEN, D.D., Ph.D.
Past Grand Master, Knight of the Royal Order of St. Catherine, etc.

Rev. PIERRE E. JONES, D.C.
Missionary in Hayti.

EMINENT DIGNITARIES OF THE ORDER.
Worthy of special Remembrance for their warm support.

Late Rt. Rev. Prince KHORENE de LUSIGNAN,
Armenian Archbishop of Constantinople.

GENERAL VALERIUS DOUYON,
Hayti.

SIGNOR GIUSEPPE SCORCIA FU LEOPOLDO,
Consul for Montenegro at Bari, Italy.

Dr. LISBOA PINTO, F. E. A. L. M.
and Fellow of the R. G. S. of Lisbon, Ceylon.

Sir RENE BOCQUET,
Redacteur en Chef de "L Aurore du XVIII Siecle," Paris.

REV. CHARLES E. BENEDICT,
Hayti.

SIR. MINAS TCHERAZ, M. R. A. S.
Prof. of Armenian at King's College, London.

ETC. ETC. ETC.

CHIVALROUS AND RELIGIOUS ORDER OF THE CROWN OF THORNS.

"*Coronam e spinis contextam imposuerunt super caput ejus.*"—S. Matt. XXVII—29.

In creating this Order we have had no pretension of putting it on a footing of equality with those which are already conferred by Sovereigns and Chiefs of States. Such an idea on our part would be the height of pride and presumption.

Its origin is, however, like that of a certain number of Orders to-day officially recognized; for they were destined—not to become secular, but to remain from the beginning *religious* and *ecclesiastical*.

We know that the Orders of the Holy Sepulchre, S. John of Jerusalem (Malta), Calatrava, Alcantara, Our Lady of Montesa, S. Benedict of Aviz, and others conferred to-day by the Holy See, Spain and Portugal, were created, not by Princes of Blood, but by pontiffs, yea, by obscure religious brotherhoods. But the Church in unlawfully allying itself with the State received from the latter decrees putting these Orders upon a footing of equality with those founded and conferred by crowned heads.

In our days there is no longer a Holy Sepulchre to guard, pilgrims to protect, and Saracens to subdue, as a reason for the existence of the above-mentioned orders; but there is wickedness to annihilate, darkness to dispel, vice to uproot, a world to purify, to evangelise, and to christianise.

We claim that it behooves the Christian Church to perpetuate this noble crusade undertaken from the moment of her foundation on the great day of the first Pentecost.

The object of the Religious Order of the Crown of Thorns, which is, and is to be, religious and Christian, is to enroll in such a holy warfare the "wise" the "great" and the "noble" spoken of by Saint Paul.

We thank the persons of high distinction, ecclesiastics, princes, diplomatists, doctors, lawyers and writers, who by their interest and encouraging words have given their approbation to the Order and afforded it so warm a welcome.

DECLARATION OF PAST GRAND MASTER.

After 2 years of service, we feel ourselves forced (for entirely personal reasons) to transfer our honorable charge of Grand Master of the Chivalrous and Religious Order of the Crown of Thorns to His Grace, J. Rene Vilatte, Primate and Archbishop of the Old Catholics in America, whose wisdom, influence, and social position will shed a greater lustre upon an Order still young, but destined, it may be, to rival those of a glorious past. We accompany with our benediction and sincerest wishes the new reign of the Chivalrous and Religious Order of the Crown of Thorns.

G. J. FERKEN, D.M., Ph. D., D.D.
Past Grand Master of the Order of Knights of the Crown of Thorns.
Portland, Oregon, May 30, 1893.

DECLARATION.

I, the undersigned, Founder and First Grand Master of the Chivalrous and Religious Order of the Crown of Thorns (founded 1st of June 1891), have transferred my charge and functions of Grand Master to His Eminence, J. Rene Vilatte, Archbishop, Metropolitan and

Primate of the Old Catholics in the United States, and to his successors in the episcopate, with full powers to confer the grades of the Order, and to make such modifications in them as he may deem fit for the well-being, honor and perpetuity of the Order.

Given at Portland, Oregon this first of June, one thousand and eight-hundred and ninety-three.

G. J. FERKEN,
[Seal of the Order] Grand Master.

PROCLAMATION OF PRESENT GRAND-MASTER

To our well beloved and trusty brethren, the Commanders, Officers, and Knights, as also to the noble Ladies of Honor and Devotion of our Knightly Order of the Crown of Thorns greeting!

Our Sovereign Lord Jesus Christ teaches us to love God and our fellow beings with all our might, and to believe all which is proposed to us in the Holy Scriptures by the Church. On the other hand the arch-enemy, knowing safety and salvation are only to be found in clinging to the deific faith in Him who was crowned with thorns and crucified, puts forth every effort to estrange men from this belief. Our vocation as simple Christians places us in the ranks of soldiers of the heavenly King, but our vocation as missioners of philanthropy and whatsoever else is of good report, and our special obligations as warriors of the Holy Temple and of the Crown of Thorns force us still more to cling firmly together, one in heart and purpose, one in obedience to the supreme Grand Master and Chief, to form under His banner a serried and compact army going on conquering and to conquer under the invincible Sign. Thus united under the All Seeing Eye, arrayed in the armour of brotherly love, armed with good works and knightly deeds, shall go on valiantly the members of our Order of the Crown of Thorns against injustice, wrong and impiety. We recognize in the blessed institution of the Order of the Crown of Thorns a power for fighting evil and establishing of righteousness.

Let us cherish our beloved Order and tho' our march be an uphill one and the obstacles to surmount many, still let us take heart, and try to enroll many worthy brethren, that they with us may reap the sure reward.

The good works and almsdeeds of the Knights and Ladies of Honor will call down upon the Order the benediction of the Grand Architect of the Universe, and the gratitude of men.

Thoroughly persuaded of the good which our Knighthood may accomplish in assuaging the ills of our common humanity, irrespective of our different shades of belief, we thank God who has called us to the head of this noble Knighthood, and while we feel that a better choice might have been made by the Order, still we have accepted the honored position from our predecessor, Past-Grand Master J. G. Ferken, D.D., with all its duties, according to his declaration of June 1st 1893. To-day we implore the fraternal prayers and vows of all the members of the Order that we may be enabled to lead it forward to the greater glory of God, stability, and prosperity.

Confiding in your obedience according to our Statutes,
I remain in the triple bond of faith, hope and charity,
Yours,
+ JOSEPH RENE VILATTE, Metropolitan,
Orthodox Old Catholic Church of America;

Superior General of the Orthodox Guild of S. Columb for England and America;

Grand Master of the Order of the Crown of Thorns.

STATUTES
OF THE
ORDER OF THE CROWN OF THORNS.

TITLE I.
ORGANIZATION OF THE ORDER.

ARTICLE 1.—The Religious Order of Knights of the Crown of Thorns receives none but persons of distinction enjoying an excellent reputation in society.

ART. 2.—Its object is to reward those who believe in the God-Man, Jesus Christ, and appreciating the grand privileges of the Christian Faith, heroically propagate its doctrines and combat error under whatsoever form it may present itself.

The Order also has in view to recompense piety, humility and philanthropy wheresoever they may be found.

ART. 3.—The Order of the Crown of Thorns is divided into three classes.

FIRST CLASS.—*Commander*.—Badge: the Cross of the Order worn pendant from a ribbon around the neck.

SECOND CLASS.—*Officer*.—Badge: the Cross worn upon left breast with rosette.

THIRD CLASS.—*Knight*.—Badge: the Cross worn upon left breast with simple bow knot.

Ladies are admitted into the Order with the titles of: Lady of Honour and Devotion of the Crown of Thorns.

ART. 4.—The Brevet signed by the Grand Master, further confers upon persons of *both sexes* the honorary title of "*Doctor Christianissimus*," mentioned on the Diploma.

ART. 5.—The first Class of the Order is a rare and honorable distinction accorded to a limited number of persons who possess merits of a transcendent kind. The Grand Master however is empowered to confer this supreme distinction, *motu proprio* upon persons who have rendered signal services to the Order.

TITLE II.
MODE AND CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION.

ART. 6.—Each postulant must send a request for admission accompanied by a concise biographical sketch and photograph to the Grand Master.

ART. 7.—The biographical sketch must give: Full name, place and date of birth, domicile, profession and honorary distinctions, and be signed by an ecclesiastic or notary public stating the fitness of the postulant.

ART. 8.—If the application is favorably received, the postulant will receive the Brevet and authority to wear the Cross of a Knight.

ART. 9.—Each Knight who shall procure *three* new candidates for the Order and shall have made a generous offering to the Grand Master (which in no case shall be less than $10) for the cause of missions at the latter's discretion, shall be promoted to the degree of Officer.

These three candidates must have fulfilled the conditions required by articles 1, 2, and 10.

ART. 10.—Each postulant for Knighthood should send his application enclosing postal note for $5.00 to defray expenses of enrollment, etc., and oblige himself to the statutory dues of an annual offering according to his means to the Order.

ART. 11.—These sums are immediately returned if the application for admission is not conformed to the above requirements, or if the title of the candidate is judged insufficient.

TITLE III.
DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF KNIGHTS.

ART. 12.—The position of Knight implies his obligation to conform to the spirit of Art. 2 aforesaid, and to use every effort to abolish paganism in idolatrous lands, and to dispel unbelief in Christian countries.

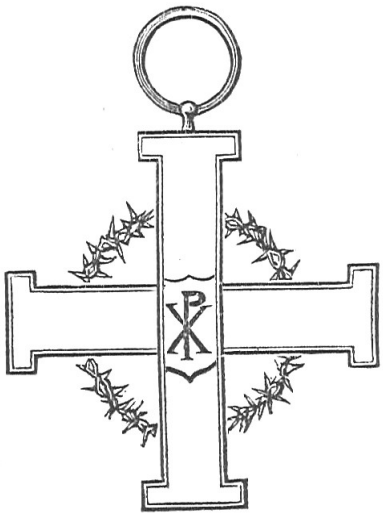
ART. 14.—Each Knight must communicate with the Grand Master once a year, to make known to the latter what he has done for the good of the Order, his own honor, and the maintenance of chivalric and religious works. The reply of the Grand Master, as emanating from the Chief in command, shall be kept *secret*, whether it contains *direction*, encouragement to generosity and heroism, or a counsel to act or suffer for God's glory or the comforting of His poor.

ART. 15.—The Grand Master does not himself supply the Cross and Insignia of the Order. They can be obtained from the reliable house of: M. CHOBILLION, (*Fabricant d' Ordres.*) 16, RUE CROIX-DES-PETITES CHAMPS, PARIS, FRANCE.

ART. 16.—The Grand Master himself appoints the Chaplain, Secretary and Treasurer.

TITLE IV.

ART. 17.—The Decoration is a Cross of Jerusalem in white enameled surrounded by a crown of Thorns in gold. In the Centre of the Cross is a shield with the monogram Chi Rho in gold.



ART. 18.—The ribbon of the Order is of red watered silk with a smooth white border.

ART. 19.—The *ring* in addition to the other insignia is worn by Religious Knights who live together in community under a common rule and have guardianship of Temples of the Order.

TITLE V.
REGISTER, ALBUM, ARCHIVES.

ART. 20—The names of Titulars are carefully inscribed upon the Register of the Order, with mention of their merits, and the services they have rendered to Christians missions or the Cause.

ART. 21.—The portraits of all members of the Order shall be put in a special album. All applications accepted, and letters of thanks are kept in the archives of the Order.

TITLE VI.

ART. 22.—The Order of the Crown of Thorns being established in the interest of Missions, all sums received over and above the working expenses will be devoted solely to that cause at the discretion of the Grand Master. An account of the manner in which these sums are disposed of will be published from time to time by the Secretary.

+ JOSEPH RENE VILATTE, Archbishop.
Grand Master of the Chivalric and Religious Order of the Crown of Thorns.

Done at Duvall,
Kewaunee County Wis.
Feast of the Crown of Thorns, Aug. 11th, 1893.

"Every century brings a change of manners and habits, and each century has its own particular duties, its own special mode of encouraging, protecting and rewarding labor, courage, devotion and good works. The orders of medieval chivalry were a glorious symbol the courage, faith and Christian love. *In our day, the Orders of chivalry should be a pledge of fraternal union among the peoples, and the recompense due to merit, and great and noble virtues of the intellect and the heart.*" Extract.—H. R. H. Prince de Lusignan.

FORM OF DONATION.

I hereby give to the ***Chivalrous and Religious Order of the Crown of Thorns*** *the sum of* ..... *to be used and appropriated by the Grand Master for religious, charitable, missionary or educational purposes.*

Dated at ..... in the County of ..... on the ..... day of ..... A.D. 189_

(Signature) .....
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